

The Effect of Communicative Language Teaching on English Speaking Proficiency: Insights from English Area of Latee

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Abstract: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been widely recognized as an effective approach in language education, emphasizing interaction and real-life communication rather than rote memorization of grammar rules. This study investigates the impact of CLT on students' speaking proficiency within the English Area of LATEE, where learners are immersed in an English-speaking environment. Using a qualitative research design, data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with students and teachers, and document analysis. The findings indicate that CLT enhances students' fluency, confidence, and ability to communicate in real-world situations. However, challenges such as teacher preparedness, student anxiety, and assessment difficulties were identified as barriers to its effective implementation. The study suggests that tailored teacher training, supportive learning environments, and alternative assessment methods can improve CLT-based instruction. These insights contribute to the ongoing discussion on optimizing communicative approaches in language learning, particularly in immersive educational settings.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, Speaking Proficiency, Language Education, Qualitative Study, Immersive Learning.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Speaking proficiency is one of the essential skills in learning a foreign language, especially English, which is widely used as an international means of communication. However, many students face difficulties in developing their speaking abilities due to a lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, and insufficient exposure to real-life communication situations. Traditional language teaching methods, which often focus on grammar rules and written exercises, do not adequately prepare students to use the language in actual conversations. To address these challenges, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been introduced as an alternative approach that prioritizes fluency over accuracy, encourages interactive learning, and fosters real-life communication skills. CLT emphasizes task-based activities, role-playing, and discussions, making language learning more engaging and practical. In the context of English Area of LATEE, where students are immersed in an environment that promotes English communication, CLT is expected to play a crucial role in enhancing their speaking proficiency.

However, the effectiveness of CLT in this setting has not been extensively studied, and there is a need to explore how students and teachers perceive its implementation, as well as the challenges encountered in the process. Despite the growing adoption of CLT in language classrooms, its actual impact on students' speaking proficiency remains a subject of debate. Some students benefit from the interactive nature of CLT, while others struggle with

confidence issues, reluctance to speak, or difficulty adapting to a less structured learning approach. Additionally, teachers may face challenges in managing communicative activities effectively and ensuring that all students actively participate.

Given these concerns, this study seeks to investigate about: How does Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) impact students' speaking proficiency in English Area of LATEE, what challenges do students and teachers face in the implementation of CLT, What strategies can be recommended to improve the effectiveness of CLT in enhancing speaking skills. The objectives of this study are as follows: To examine the effect of CLT on students' fluency, confidence, and ability to communicate in real- life situations, to identify the challenges that arise in the implementation of CLT, both from students' and teachers' perspectives, to propose strategies that can enhance the effectiveness of CLT in improving students' speaking proficiency. This study is significant for several reasons:

For Educators: The findings will provide insights into how CLT can be effectively implemented in language classrooms, helping teachers design better communicative activities. For Students: Understanding the benefits and challenges of CLT will encourage students to engage more actively in communicative tasks and overcome their speaking anxieties. For Language Learning Research: This study will contribute to the existing literature on CLT and its role in enhancing speaking proficiency, particularly in immersive language environments like English Area of LATEE. This study focuses on students and teachers at English Area of LATEE, examining their experiences with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and its effects on speaking proficiency. The research is limited to qualitative data collection methods, including interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. While this approach provides in-depth insights, it does not measure speaking proficiency quantitatively, which could be a limitation in assessing CLT's effectiveness in numerical terms.

This paper discusses the concept of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), its main principles, and previous research on the effectiveness of CLT in improving speaking skills. Additionally, it will examine the challenges encountered in implementing CLT in language learning environments. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): Definition and Principles Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a language learning approach that emphasizes the use of language in real communication contexts. Unlike traditional methods that focus more on grammar and vocabulary memorization, CLT prioritizes fluency and accuracy in speaking through authentic communication practice. According to Richards & Rodgers (2001), CLT is based on several key principles:

Communication as the Goal: The primary objective is to equip students with the skills to communicate in various real-life situations. *Task-Based Learning*: Learning activities involve communicative tasks such as discussions, role-playing, and problem-solving. *Student-Centered Learning*: Students take center stage in the learning process, while teachers act as facilitators. *Use of Authentic Materials*: Learning materials are derived from real-life situations to enhance more natural speaking skills. *Integration of Four Language Skills*: CLT integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing into a cohesive learning process.

Many studies have shown that CLT is effective in improving students' speaking skills. Savignon (1991) investigated the implementation of CLT in foreign language learning and

found that students taught using this method showed significant improvements in speaking fluency compared to those taught using traditional grammar-based methods. Larsen-Freeman (2000) stated that students learning through a communicative approach exhibited greater confidence in speaking and demonstrated better comprehension and responsiveness in real conversations. Nunan (2004) highlighted that the use of communication-based tasks in CLT encouraged students to be more active in class, leading to gradual improvements in their speaking skills. However, some studies have also pointed out challenges in implementing CLT. Littlewood (2007) found that in certain language learning contexts, students still felt uncomfortable with this method due to a lack of habitual speaking practice in the target language, particularly in environments where their first language is more dominant. Challenges in Implementing CLT in Language Learning Environments, although CLT has been proven effective in enhancing speaking skills, its implementation is not always easy. Below are some common challenges:

1. Limited Exposure to the Target Language

In some learning environments, students rarely have opportunities to use the target language outside the classroom. This limitation hinders their ability to develop speaking skills naturally.

2. Student Reluctance to Speak

Some students, particularly those from cultures less accustomed to verbal interaction, often feel shy or afraid of making mistakes while speaking. This reluctance makes them passive in communicative activities, reducing the effectiveness of CLT.

3. Teacher's Role and Challenges

Teachers accustomed to traditional methods often struggle to implement CLT, as it requires them to shift from direct instruction to facilitating communication. Additionally, teachers need strong classroom management skills to ensure that every student has an opportunity to speak.

4. Assessment Difficulties

In CLT, assessment goes beyond grammar and sentence structure, encompassing fluency, coherence, and confidence in speaking. This creates challenges for teachers in objectively evaluating students' speaking skills.

5. The Role of CLT in the English Area of LATEE

The English Area of LATEE is an environment focused on intensive English language learning. CLT is implemented in this area with the expectation that students will improve their speaking skills through real-life communication situations. Therefore, this study will explore how the CLT method is applied in the English Area of LATEE, as well as the challenges and effectiveness of this approach in enhancing students' speaking proficiency.

B. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method with a case study approach to explore how the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method influences students' speaking skills in the English Area of LATEE. A case study was chosen because it allows the researcher to explore students' and teachers' experiences, interactions, and challenges in a communication-based learning context.

1. **Participants**, participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling, in which participants were chosen based on specific criteria relevant to the research. The participant criteria are as follows: Students. Students who have participated in the CLT program in the English Area of LATEE for at least one month. Teachers. Instructors who use the CLT method to teach speaking skills in this environment. Number of participants: Students, 10–15 individuals selected based on a variation in their speaking proficiency levels. Teachers, 2–3 individuals with experience teaching using the CLT method.
2. **Data Collection**, data were collected using three primary techniques:
3. **Classroom Observation**, Observations were conducted to examine how CLT is implemented in the classroom and how students engage in communication-based learning. The observations took place over multiple class sessions and recorded the following aspects:
 - a. Interactions between students and teachers in speaking activities.
 - b. Teaching strategies used in CLT (e.g., role play, discussion, problem-solving).
 - c. Students' responses and engagement in speaking activities.
 - d. Field notes and audio/video recordings were used for further analysis.
4. **In-Depth Interviews**, semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore students' and teachers' experiences and perceptions regarding the implementation of CLT in enhancing speaking skills. Interviews with students: Focused on their experiences learning with CLT, the challenges they faced, and any improvements in their speaking abilities and confidence.
5. **Interviews with teachers**, focused on the effectiveness of CLT methods, the strategies used, and the challenges in implementation. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed in depth.
6. **Documentation**, documentation included teaching materials, students' speaking assignments, and audio recordings from CLT class sessions. These were used as supplementary data to understand students' speaking skill development.
7. **Data Analysis**, data were analyzed using thematic analysis with the following steps: Data Transcription. Interview and observation data were transcribed to ensure all information was well-documented. Data Coding. Key themes emerging from the data were identified, such as: Improvement in speaking confidence, Students' difficulties in following the CLT method, The effectiveness of specific CLT techniques in enhancing fluency. Analysis and Interpretation. Patterns and relationships between findings from interviews, observations, and documentation were identified and structured.

8. **Trustworthiness (Data Validity).** to ensure data validity, this study employed method triangulation by comparing findings from observations, interviews, and documentation to ensure accuracy and consistency of the results.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the qualitative research findings on the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the English Area of LATEE. These findings are based on data collected through student and teacher interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis conducted during the research process. The findings are discussed in the context of how CLT influences students' speaking skills and the challenges encountered during its implementation. *Impact of CLT on Speaking Proficiency:* Based on student interviews and classroom observations, it was found that the implementation of CLT significantly impacts students' speaking skills. Most students reported improvements in their confidence and fluency after participating in the CLT program.

Improvement in Fluency and Confidence: Students engaged in CLT-based learning demonstrated increased fluency in speaking. They were more active in conversations and could express ideas more spontaneously. For instance, some students reported feeling more comfortable speaking English, especially in group discussions or real-life situational speaking activities.

Student A: *"I feel more confident now when speaking with my friends in English. I used to be afraid of making mistakes, but now I feel more fluent because we often talk about various topics."*

More Natural Language Use: In addition to fluency, a more natural use of language was also noted as a positive outcome of CLT implementation. Students became more accustomed to social interactions in English, enabling them to speak in a more contextualized and realistic manner. Activities such as role- playing and problem-solving provided opportunities for students to practice language in relevant situations.

Student B: *"We often do role plays, so I can speak more naturally instead of just memorizing vocabulary and grammar rules."*

Impact on Listening Skills and Responsiveness: Classroom observations showed that when students were engaged in speaking activities, they also indirectly improved their listening skills. CLT requires students to be more responsive in conversations, which enhances their ability to comprehend and respond more quickly in discussions. *Comparison with Traditional Teaching Methods:* Findings from interviews and observations also revealed significant differences between the CLT method and traditional teaching methods, which focus more on grammar instruction and vocabulary memorization. *More Active Student Engagement in Learning:* In traditional teaching methods, students tend to be more passive, merely listening to the teacher explain grammar rules or memorizing vocabulary. In CLT-based teaching, students are actively engaged in conversations, speaking tasks, and social interactions that allow them to practice speaking more freely.

Teacher C: *"In traditional teaching, it's harder to get students to speak. But with CLT, they're more involved in conversations because they feel freer to speak without fear of making mistakes".*

Increased Student Motivation: CLT also appeared to enhance students' motivation. Task-based learning, such as group discussions or simulated conversations, made students more interested in participating, as they found the learning process more relevant to real-life situations. This contrasts with traditional methods, which are often perceived as monotonous and lacking contextual relevance.

Student C: *"I like this way of learning because we don't just study theory; we actually practice speaking with our classmates."*

Challenges and Limitations in CLT Implementation: Despite the positive impact of CLT on speaking skills, several challenges were encountered by both students and teachers during its implementation. *Time and Resource Constraints:* One of the biggest challenges for teachers was the limited time available to conduct effective speaking activities. In some classes, especially those with a large number of students, it was difficult to ensure that every student had an equal opportunity to speak.

Teacher D: *"Sometimes our classes are too large, making it hard for every student to speak as much as they need to. Class time is also limited."*

Student Shyness and Discomfort: Although many students showed increased confidence, some still felt shy or anxious when asked to speak in English. Some students were uncomfortable speaking in front of the class, especially if they felt their language skills were inadequate.

Student D: *"I still feel nervous speaking in front of the class. Sometimes I'm afraid my classmates will laugh at me if I make a mistake."*

The Teacher's Role as a Facilitator: CLT requires teachers to act as facilitators, guiding speaking activities and managing classroom dynamics. This poses a challenge, particularly for teachers who are not yet familiar with this approach or who are more accustomed to conventional teaching methods.

Teacher E: *"As a teacher, I have to be more creative and patient in facilitating students. Sometimes they need more encouragement to speak."*

Student and Teacher Perspectives on CLT: Overall, both students and teachers had positive views on CLT implementation, despite the challenges faced. Students appreciated this approach because it was more relevant and helped them speak with greater confidence.

Meanwhile, teachers believed that CLT could be an effective approach if supported by sufficient time and proper training.

Student E: *"I think CLT makes me more prepared to speak with foreigners. I enjoy English lessons more now."*

Teacher F: *"Although there are challenges in implementing CLT, I see my students becoming more active and confident in speaking. This is a great improvement."*

Conclusion of Findings:

The research findings indicate that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can significantly enhance students' speaking skills, particularly in terms of fluency, confidence, and more natural language use. However, challenges such as time constraints, student shyness, and the teacher's role as a facilitator remain obstacles that need to be addressed to maximize the effectiveness of CLT. This study provides insights into how CLT is implemented in the English Area of LATEE and its contributions to more communicative and skill-based English language learning.

D. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the English Area of LATEE has a significant impact on improving students' speaking skills. The key findings can be summarized as follows: Improvement in Fluency and Confidence Students who learned through the CLT method showed improvements in their fluency and confidence in using English. Activities such as discussions, role-plays, and problem-solving provided more natural speaking experiences and helped them overcome their fear of communication. More Active Engagement in Learning, compared to traditional methods that focus more on grammar and vocabulary memorization, CLT allows students to be more actively involved in the learning process. They engage in more authentic conversations and use English more frequently in classroom interactions.

Challenges in CLT Implementation Although CLT has proven to be effective, several challenges were encountered during its implementation, such as: Time and resource constraints: especially in large classes where ensuring equal speaking opportunities for all students is difficult. Students' shyness and discomfort: particularly among those who are not yet accustomed to speaking in English. The teacher's role as a facilitator: which requires skills and creativity to manage a communication-based classroom effectively. Supportive Learning Environment, the success of CLT heavily depends on a supportive learning environment. An environment that provides more opportunities for students to use English in daily life accelerates their speaking skill development. Overall, CLT can be an effective method for improving speaking skills if supported by an appropriate approach, active student participation, and encouragement from teachers and the learning environment.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) implementation in the English Area of LATEE and other learning environments:

1. Increase Speaking Practice Opportunities Outside the Classroom Implement an "English Only Zone" program to encourage students to use English in daily conversations. Organize extracurricular activities such as English Club, Public Speaking, and Debating Club to provide students with continuous speaking practice in a more relaxed setting.
2. Develop Strategies to Overcome Students' Shyness
Use scaffolding techniques, where students receive gradual guidance before speaking in front of the class. Apply a peer support approach, allowing students to practice in small groups before speaking in front of a larger audience. Provide constructive feedback to ensure students do not feel afraid of making mistakes.
3. Enhance Teacher Training
Teachers need training in CLT techniques to implement this method more effectively. Workshops on communication-based teaching strategies can help teachers design more engaging and interactive activities.
4. Optimize Time and Classroom Management
Implement a group rotation method, where students take turns speaking in small groups to ensure equal participation. Utilize technology and interactive media, such as communication-based learning apps, to enhance students' speaking practice more effectively. Continuous Evaluation and Development of CLT Programs. Conduct regular evaluations to assess the effectiveness of CLT implementation and adjust strategies as needed. Further research can explore additional strategies to overcome CLT challenges in different language learning contexts.

This study provides insights into how Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) contributes to improving students' speaking skills in the English Area of LATEE. With proper planning and implementation, this method can be an effective approach to teaching English. It is hoped that this research can serve as a reference for educators in developing more communicative and skill-based learning methods.

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